

## **CC-IMED: The California Consortium for Informatics in Medical Education and Development**

Anthony R. Kwak, Ed.D and Nikola Jurisic, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles  
Parvati Dev, Ph.D., Stanford University

Helene M. Hoffman, Ph.D. and Anne Irwin, M.D., University of California, San Diego

The California Consortium for Informatics in Medical Education and Development (CC-IMED) began in late 1990 with an inaugural meeting of representatives from the medical schools in California. The representatives were individuals identified by the academic deans from each participating school as having major responsibilities related to computer-based instruction.

### **MISSION AND ORGANIZATION**

From its inception, CC-IMED's focus has been on sharing, cooperation, collaboration, face-to-face meetings and open communications among its members. The stated mission of the consortium is "to provide a forum to promote the development, evaluation, dissemination, and utilization of technology-based medical education".

The organizational structure of CC-IMED has remained informal and small, limiting membership to the eight medical schools in California. Each school has one to two representatives who meet on an average of two to three times per year. There is no separate budget for the consortium and no membership fees. Travel, meeting, communications and project-related costs are assumed by the member institutions. There are no organizational officers, board of directors, or staff personnel. Responsibility for hosting, organizing and presiding over meetings or carrying out projects are shared among all members.

### **ACTIVITIES**

Consortium activities and interests have included software evaluation, visual databases, resource sharing, curriculum databases, computer and informatics literacy, networking, multimedia computing, and faculty development.

An early consortium project was the development of a computer literacy assessment instrument which has been administered to incoming first-year medical students in California since the fall of 1991. The results of these surveys have assisted member schools in developing plans for computer-based instructional

programs and facilities. Other surveys to assess students' medical informatics competencies and their use of computers in the curriculum are being developed for students at the end of their second and fourth years.

In 1992, the consortium published a *Curriculum Software Inventory* which describes the "successful" use of computer-based programs in the medical school curriculum. In addition to descriptive information about a program, each entry contains information on how a program is actually used in an institution, by what faculty and students, and why it has been judged as "successful". Multiple entries for a specific program provide data for comparing how a program is used in different institutions. Thus far, the inventory is providing valuable insights into the varying ways computer-based instruction in contributing to medical education.

Other consortium activities have resulted in a grant from Apple Computer Corporation which provided member schools with educational software development equipment and helped to establish a consortium internet server with additional assistance from Upjohn; established a special agreement for the sharing of consortium member developed DxR cases with the DxR Development Group; agreed to share patient cases developed for *Short Rounds*, a patient case multimedia presentation program developed by Stanford University, a consortium member.

### **CONCLUSION**

The mission of the CC-IMED is a very broad and general one which reflects the rather diverse interests and needs of its members. As a consortia, it has evolved into a unique and open environment that has fostered cooperation, collaboration and innovation on many fronts. To date, it has provided its members with benefits far beyond their initial expectations and has resulted in accomplishments that could have been achieved only through inter-institutional sharing.